WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A lithographic projection apparatus comprising:

an illumination system to provide a beam of radiation;

an article support to support an article to be placed in a beam path of said beam of radiation; and

a clamp to clamp said article to said article support,

wherein said clamp is provided with a plurality of zones located around a circumference of said article support to create a locally adjusted pressure so as to provide a local bending moment to locally bend said article.

2. A lithographic projection apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said article support comprises at least three support pillars.

3. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said article support consists of three pillars.

4. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said article support consists of four support pillars.

5. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said support pillars are actuable.

6. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said support pillars are piezo-pads.

7. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of zones comprises an individually controllable clamp.

8. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said clamp comprises a height sensor to sense a local height of the article.

9. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a clamp control unit to adjust the clamping pressure of said plurality of zones to attain a leveled article.

10. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said clamp control unit is configured to control said clamping pressure in response to at least one of a detected local height of said article and a detected image quality.

11. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of zones comprise sectioned pressure zones to create a relatively differing backfill gas pressure.

12. A lithographic apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said article comprises a reticle.

13. An article support to support a flat article to be placed in a beam path of radiation, said article support comprising:

a clamp to clamp said article to said article support,

wherein said clamp is provided with a plurality of zones to create a locally adjusted pressure so as to provide a local bending moment to locally bend said article.

14. A device manufacturing method, comprising:

providing a beam of radiation;

patterning the beam of radiation;

projecting the patterned beam of radiation onto a target portion of a later of radiation-sensitive material using a projection system;

clamping an article to be placed in a beam path of the beam of radiation; and

adjusting at least one clamping pressure to attain a flat article.

15. A device manufacturing method according to claim 14, further comprising:

sensing a local height of the article.

16. A device manufacturing method according to claim 15, wherein said adjusting of the at least one clamping pressure is in response to said sensing the local height.

17. A device manufactured according to the method of claim 14.

18. A method of supporting a reticle, comprising:

placing a reticle on a reticle support;

determining at least one of an uneveness, unflatness, and tilting of said reticle on said support; and

applying pressure to said reticle to bend said reticle to correct said at least one of said uneveness, unflatness, and tilting of said reticle.